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SUBJECT: EUROPEAN BRIEF OCPAS-EUR 89-084 FOR 12 APRIL 1989.

FROM: DDI/O/CPAS.

CONTENTS

1. USSR: GEORGIA QUIET BUT TENSE ☐

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SOVIET MEDIA REPORT THAT THERE WERE NO MAJOR INCIDENTS DURING THE OFFICIAL DAY OF MOURNING IN TBILISI YESTERDAY BUT THAT TROOPS IN ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS STILL PATROLLED THE STREETS, SOME STRIKE ACTIVITY CONTINUED, AND HUNDREDS OF CURFEW VIOLATORS WERE ARRESTED LAST NIGHT. ☐

FOREIGN MINISTER SHEVARDNADZE YESTERDAY CHAIRED MEETINGS BETWEEN PARTY OFFICIALS AND GEORGIAN CITIZENS IN WHICH HE CALLED THE VIOLENCE ON SUNDAY "A BIG MISTAKE" AND HINTED THAT TROOPS WERE TO

APPROVED FOR
RELEASE ☐ DATE:
29-Mar-2010

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[REDACTED]

BLAME FOR THE DEATHS. [REDACTED] GEORGIAN FIRST SECRETARY PATIASHVILI--APPEARING SHAKEN IN A TELEVISED INTERVIEW YESTERDAY--TOOK RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DECISION TO BREAK UP THE PROTEST BUT SAID LOCAL LEADERS HAD BEEN ASSURED BEFORE TROOPS MOVED IN THAT THERE WOULD BE NO FATALITIES. [REDACTED]

SOVIET SPOKESMAN GENNADIY GERASIMOV SAID YESTERDAY THAT 12 VICTIMS DIED FROM ASPHYXIATION IN THE PANIC THAT RESULTED WHEN MVD TROOPS MOVED ON THE CROWD. [REDACTED] THE TROOPS USED SHOVELS AS TRUNCHEONS, AND SCORES OF UNARMED GEORGIAN POLICE WERE INJURED TRYING TO PROTECT DEMONSTRATORS. MEANWHILE, THE MILITARY NEWSPAPER KRASNAYA ZVEZDA PLAYED UP STORIES THAT DEMONSTRATORS HAD ASSAULTED OFFICERS ON SATURDAY AND ATTACKED THE TRANSCAUCASUS MILITARY DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS. [REDACTED]

COMMENT: THE AUTHORITIES APPEAR TO HAVE BEEN TAKEN ABACK BY THE DEATHS AND ARE TRYING TO PORTRAY THE VIOLENCE AS BEYOND THEIR CONTROL. THE KRASNAYA ZVEZDA ARTICLE SUGGESTS THE MILITARY IS TRYING TO DEFLECT CRITICISM OF ITS PERFORMANCE. NEVERTHELESS, THE TROOPS' ADVANCE ON THE PROTESTERS WAS DELIBERATE AND INTENDED TO BREAK UP THE DEMONSTRATION. THE AIRLIFT THAT PRECEDED THE CLASHES, THE TIGHTENING OF LAWS AGAINST ANTIREGIME ACTIVITY, AND HARSH STATEMENTS MADE BY REPUBLIC AND CENTRAL PARTY OFFICIALS AGAINST "EXTREMISTS" INDICATE A DECISION TO CLAMP DOWN. ARRESTS OF CURFEW VIOLATORS ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE AS THE GOVERNMENT SEEKS TO REGAIN FULL CONTROL OF THE CITY. [REDACTED]

USSR

DZHUMBER PATIASHVILI

GEORGIAN PARTY BOSS UNDER FIRE

RECENT PRECEDENT INDICATES THAT PATIASHVILI WILL LOSE HIS JOB IF DISTURBANCES CONTINUE. PARTY BOSSES IN ESTONIA, LATVIA, LITHUANIA, ARMENIA, AND AZERBAIJAN--THE REPUBLICS THAT HAVE HAD THE LARGEST NATIONALIST DEMONSTRATIONS IN THE PAST YEAR--HAVE BEEN REPLACED. PATIASHVILI, LIKE HIS COUNTERPARTS, HAS COME UNDER CONSIDERABLE PRESSURE FROM MOSCOW TO CONTROL UNREST AND COMPETING PRESSURES FROM LOCAL NATIONALISTS THAT HE RESPOND TO THEIR DEMANDS. [REDACTED]

PATIASHVILI HAS PERSONAL TIES TO THE CENTRAL LEADERSHIP. HOWEVER, THAT MIGHT HELP HIM HANG ON: HE WORKED WITH MIKHAIL GORBACHEV FROM 1978 TO 1984 ON GEORGIAN AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS AND WAS APPARENTLY HANDPICKED FOR HIS CURRENT JOB IN 1985 BY EDUARD SHEVARDNADZE, HIS PREDECESSOR AS GEORGIAN PARTY BOSS. SHEVARDNADZE MANAGED TO CONTAIN SEVERAL NATIONALIST DEMONSTRATIONS DURING HIS TENURE IN GEORGIA AND MAY SYMPATHIZE WITH PATIASHVILI'S CURRENT FLIGHT. [REDACTED]

ALTHOUGH PATIASHVILI HAS GENERALLY TRIED TO PLAY DOWN THE IMPORTANCE OF NATIONALIST TENSIONS IN GEORGIA, HE HAS CONCEDED THAT THE CLASHES BETWEEN ARMENIANS AND AZERBAIJANIS LAST YEAR HAD REVERBERATIONS IN GEORGIA. IN A SPEECH TO THE USSR SUPREME SOVIET IN NOVEMBER, PATIASHVILI SAID EARLIER ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH INTERETHNIC AND NATIONALIST PROBLEMS WERE INADEQUATE AND CALLED FOR

AN "IMPROVED COORDINATION OF ACTIONS." [REDACTED]

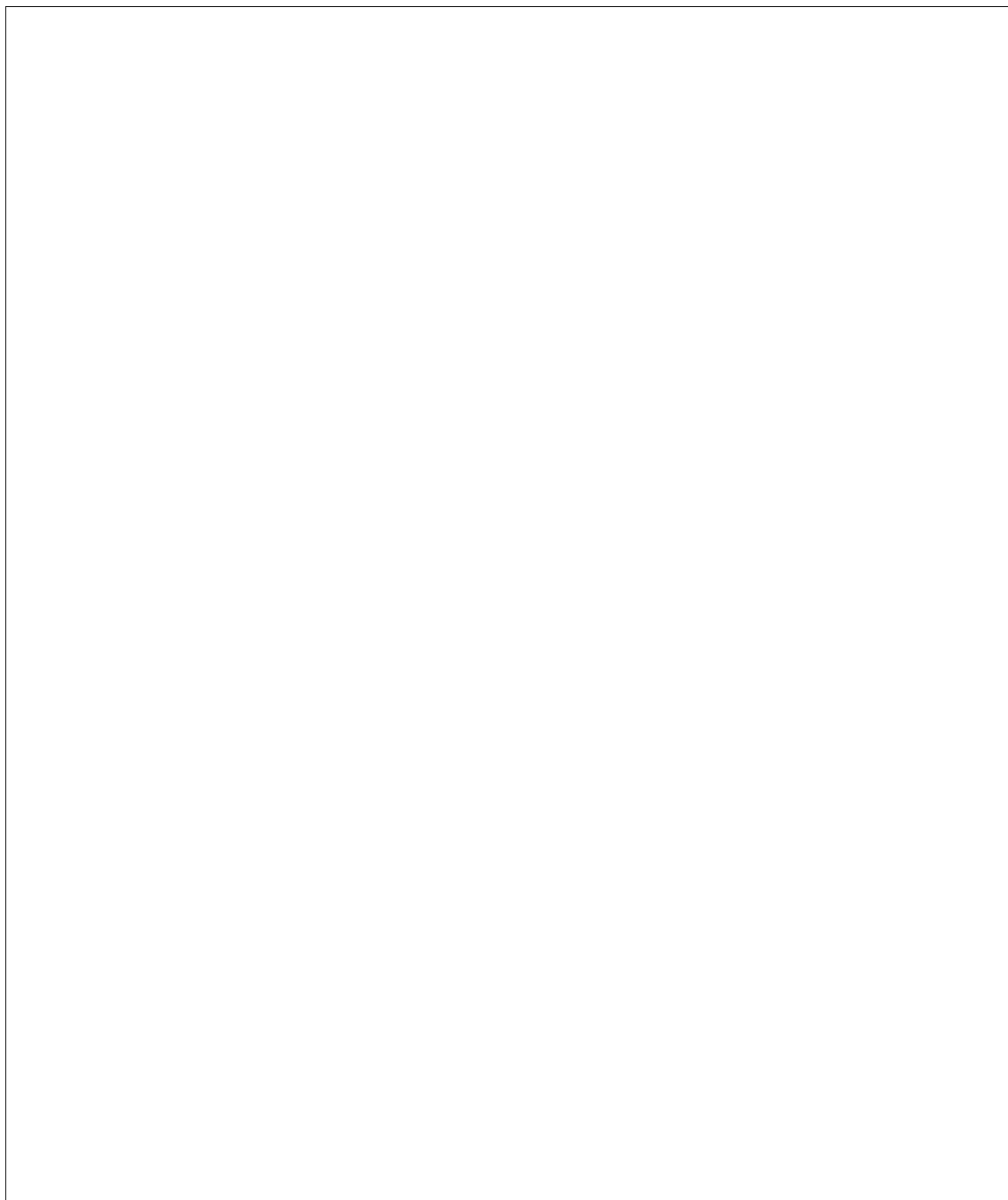
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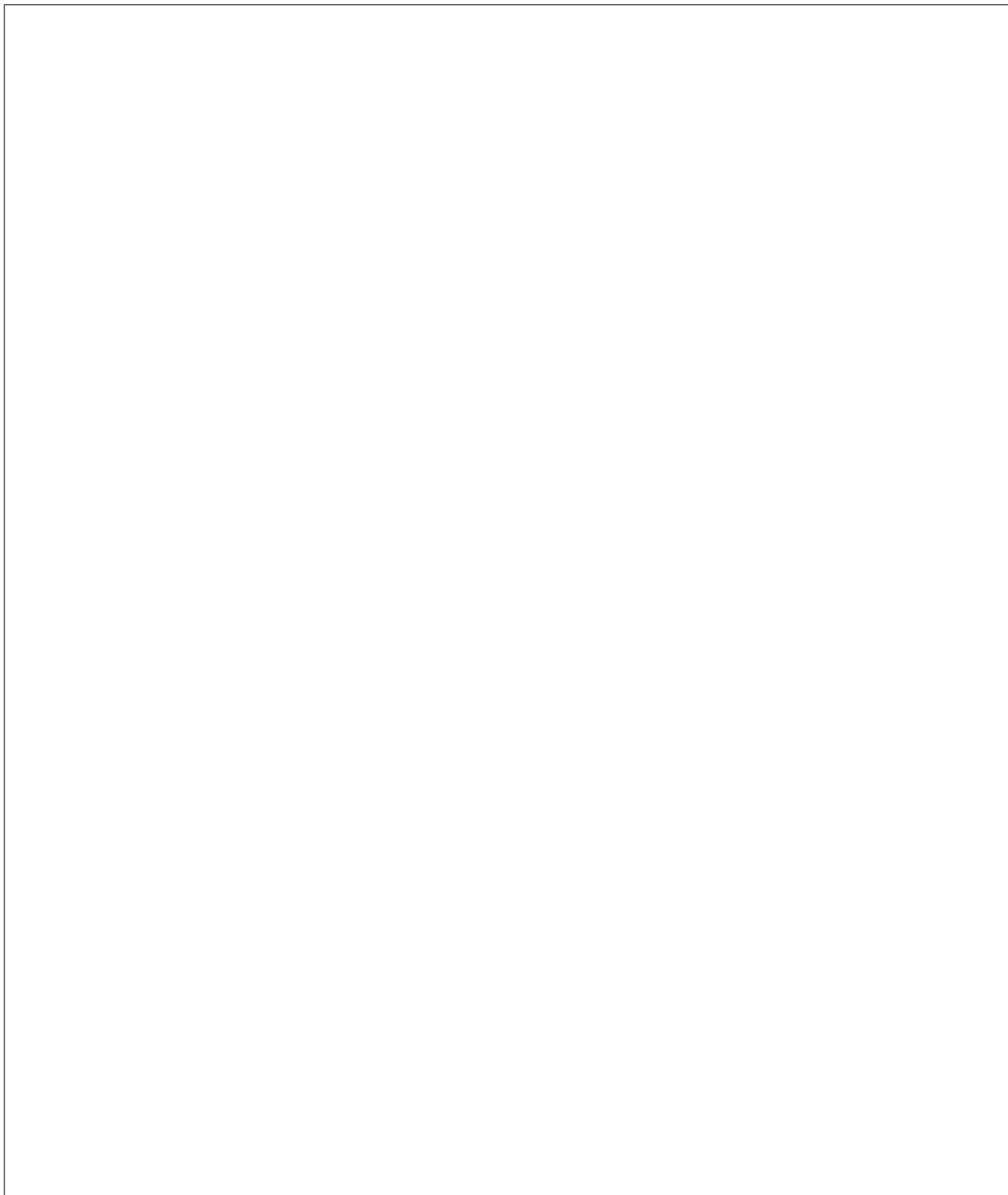
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